Coaches in passenger and express trains

411. SHRI C.O. POULOSE: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of passenger and express trains increased in Ninth Five Year Plan period;

(b) the corresponding increase in the number of coaches during that period;

(c) whether absence of increase in coaches has resulted in over-use of the available stock, with a drastic effect on their health and rail-worthiness; and

(d) if so, what steps have been taken to increase production of coaches in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS(SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Trains are not introduced Plan-wise but on an yearly basis depending upon traffic justification, operational feasibility and availability of resources.

(b) The passenger coach holding has increased from 30,002 as on 31.03.1997 to 33,260 as on 31.03.2001.

(c) No, Sir. The average coach utilization has increased by about 9.05% over the period from 31.03.1997 to 31.03.2001 as compared to a 10.85% increase in coach holding over the same period.

(d) Does not arise.

Reduction in power tariffs by States for the railways

412. SHRI R.S. GAVAI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways have requested the State Governments to reduce power tariffs and contribute to the expansion and electrification network in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the reaction of State Governments thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir. If the State Governments reduce electricity tariff, the rate of return of Railway Electrification projects will increase. Railways will be able to electrify more Route Kilometres as more and more Railway Electrification projects will qualify the threshold limit of 14% rate of returns for consideration.

(b) and (c) Details of the action taken by this Ministry for reduction in power tariffs for electric traction are as under:

(i) State Governments and Power supply authorities are being constantly persuaded to reduce tariff to make it reasonable.

(ii) State Electricity Regulatory Commissions (SERCs) have been set up in 13 States. In 11 States, the zonal Railways have approached SERCS. During 2001-2002, after successful presentations, reduction of 1 to 4% in tariff has been achieved in UP, Delhi, Maharashtra and Haryana. In Andhra Pradesh, there has been no increase in tariff. It has also been possible to limit the increase in two States *i.e.* Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh.

Facilities at railway stations in U.P.

†413. SHRI MUNNAVAR HASAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that public convenience services like toilets, drinking water, sitting arrangements and canteen are lacking at Shamli, Muzaffarnagar, Saharanpur, Jaunpur City and Azamgarh railway stations in Uttar Pradesh;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the details of the steps being taken to provide such facilities?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) and (b) Passenger Amenities at stations are provided as per the laid down norms which are based on the daily passenger traffic at stations and annual earnings therefrom.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.